

California Water and Infrastructure Report

Formerly, the “California Drought (and Flood) Update”



For September 27, 2018

by Patrick Ruckert

Published weekly since July, 2014

An archive of all these weekly reports can be found at both links below:

<http://www.californiadroughtupdate.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/CaliforniaDroughtUpdate>

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“From the first day of my Administration permanent security was just as much in the front of our minds as the temporary bolstering of banks, the furnishing of immediate jobs and the increase of direct purchasing power. Recovery has come far and with reasonable speed; reform has come less far in the same period of time. But reform is just as important to permanent security in the spring of 1938 as it was in the spring of 1933.”

From the introduction of the second volume of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's “Public Papers and Addresses”

A Note To Readers

The quote from President Franklin D. Roosevelt above demonstrated his understanding of the immediate measures required to bring people out of the misery of the Depression, a policy that also had to simultaneously lay the basis for long-term progress.

Within months of that President's inauguration on March 4, 1933, FDR had initiated projects all over the nation, putting people to work and beginning to build the nation's infrastructure that would play a central role in allowing the nation to become the “arsenal of democracy” it was during World War II.

Those projects, just to name a few, included restarting construction on Hoover Dam, building the Grand Coulee Dam, and the Central Valley Project of California and its many dams and aqueducts. It also included the Civilian Conservation Corps, that over the nine years of its existence, put to work almost 10 million young men in the forests of the nation and even in the cities, building roads, bridges, public

libraries and much more. And in 1935, FDR initiated the Rural Electrification Administration (REA). In that year only 10 percent of the farms of the nation had electricity. Most electrical power in the country then was privately owned and the private utilities would not spend the money required to lay the lines to hook up the agricultural sector. The REA provided government loans to coops established in farm communities and by the beginning of the U.S. entry into World War II, almost 40 percent of the farms had electricity, dramatically increasing farm productivity and freeing up manpower for the war factories in the cities and for the military. By 1951, over 90 percent of the farms were electrified.

The center piece of all these projects was the Tennessee Valley Project (TVA).

The TVA, established at the trough of the U.S. economic collapse in May 1933, built a series of 20 dams in less than 20 years to control flooding and expand navigation on the Tennessee River and its tributaries. The program introduced electricity to virtually every farm and household in an area spanning seven states, developed improved fertilizers and advanced agricultural methods, and introduced health care and literacy to a population not very different, at that time, from many less developed nations today.

Internationally, the TVA gave hope and optimism for the future to hundreds of millions of people, especially in nations which had only recently won their independence at the end of World War II.

According to then-TVA head David Lilienthal writing in 1954, representatives of nearly every nation in the world had visited the TVA over its first 20 years. These included Prime Minister David Ben Gurion of Israel, and officials from many Arab countries.

Here are a couple of videos on the TVA:

Historic TVA Film: This is TVA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgFxtmiHQ2c>

Life in the Tennessee Valley in the 1930s & 1940s Documentary 1944

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZoEXrYfy6wY>

Today, the equivalent to FDR's policy has found its home in China. China has not only studied the TVA, but has used its lessons to build the Three Gorges Dam and the greatest water management system in the world today, the Move South Water North project. More than that, the TVA is the model used by China in its massive Belt and Road Initiative of building infrastructure all over the world.

Some comments on this are in the last item of the report: 'Tennessee Valley Authority Imperialism.'

A final note on this topic: As has been reported, more than 125 million trees in California have died over the last few years due to drought and bark beetle infestation. These trees are now providing the easily noncombustible fuel for wild fires. Perhaps a modern CCC program to put a few 10s of thousands of unemployed youth to work clearing the forests is now an appropriate measure. And like the original CCC program, they can work half a day and go to school and learn skills the other half.

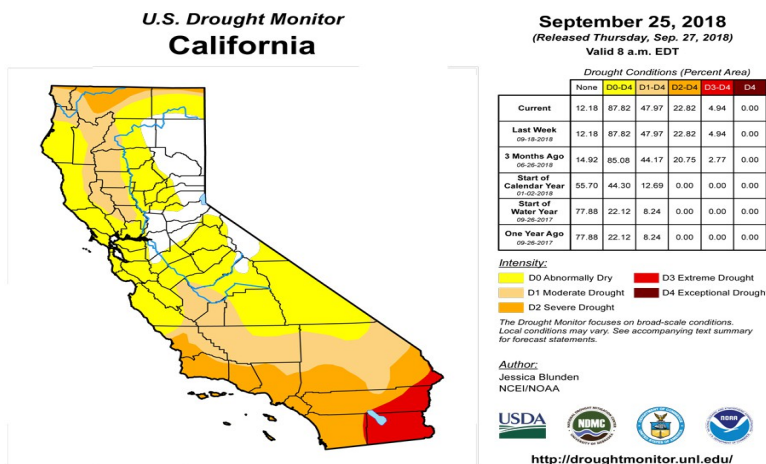
In This Week's Report

The report is very short this week, which gives myself and you the reader a little break.

We begin with the U.S. Drought Monitor which once again shows little or no increased intensity of the drought. Though we should be clear, the state is in a drought.

The Oroville Dam Update has several items on construction progress. Then there is a commentary on the Huntington Beach desalination plant. The report concludes with the TVA and China item.

U.S. Drought Monitor



Oroville Dam Update

Oroville Dam Work Spillway Work On Target To Meet Nov. 1 Deadline

September 26, 2018 a

<https://sacramento.cbslocal.com/2018/09/26/oroville-dam-spillway-september-update/>

OROVILLE (CBS13) — Concrete placement on the Oroville Dam spillway is likely to meet the Nov. 1 public safety construction deadline despite some setbacks, the California Department of Water Resources said on Wednesday.

One of the slabs in the middle chute of the spillway needed to be replaced earlier this month due to hot weather and high winds affecting its surface. That slab is one of 221 that have been placed on the spillway through the work process and DWR doesn't expect that to affect the schedule.

That middle chute is 95 percent complete as crews place slabs and walls on the chute. Only seven slabs remain and all 76 walls have been placed. The upper chute is 76 percent complete with 108 of 150 slabs and 14 of 50 walls placed.

The Nov. 1 deadline isn't for all work. Work will continue on the emergency spillway past that date, and concrete curing, joint sealing and sidewall backfill will continue on the main spillway.

One-way traffic controls from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. are scheduled to continue on Oro Dam Boulevard between Glen Drive and Canyon Drive while the underground transmission line project continues. That's slated to end in mid-October.

Earlier this month, the cost of the project crossed the \$1 billion threshold as unexpected excavation projects were found. The plan calls for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to pay for 75 percent of the repairs, with water project customers bearing the final 25 percent. FEMA has not said whether or not it would cover those costs.

Deadline nears for Oroville Dam spillway concrete placement

Bill Husa — Mercury-Register

Construction continues on the Oroville Dam spillway on Tuesday. The state Department of Water Resources expects to meet its Nov. 1 deadline to have all concrete placed on the main spillway.

By [Risa Johnson](#)

Chico Enterprise-Record

September 26, 2018

<https://www.chicoer.com/2018/09/26/deadline-nears-for-oroville-dam-spillway-concrete-placement/>

OROVILLE SPILLWAYS: Construction Update (with photos and video)

[September 26, 2018](#)



A drone provides a bird's-eye view of concrete work underway on the upper chute of Lake Oroville main spillway and the emergency spillway during Phase 2 of the recovery effort in Butte County, California. Photo taken September 19, 2018 by Florence Low/DWR

From the Department of Water Resources:

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) today provided an update on construction activities for the Oroville Spillways Emergency Recovery Project.

Main Spillway

- November 1, 2018 is a public safety construction milestone to complete placement of all concrete on the main spillway. Dry finishing, concrete curing, joint sealing, completing sidewall backfill and site clean-up on the main spillway will continue after Nov. 1.*
- The upper chute is 76 percent complete. Crews have placed 108 of 150 erosion-resistant concrete (ERC) structural slabs and 14 of 50 ERC structural walls on the uppermost 730 feet of upper chute.*
- The middle chute is 95 percent complete. Crews continue to place ERC structural slabs and walls on the middle chute. To date, crews have placed 221 of 228 slabs and 76 of 76 walls.*
- Hot and high winds affected the surface of a slab during its placement on the middle chute earlier this month. DWR determined the slab surface did not meet specifications and plans to remove and replace it. This will not impact the schedule.*
- Repair work on the energy dissipaters, or dentates, at the base of the main spillway is 65 percent complete.*

Emergency Spillway

- *Placement of roller-compacted concrete (RCC) on the southern half of the emergency spillway splashpad is 83 percent complete. RCC placement resumed on Monday, Sept. 10, after completion of scheduled maintenance on the RCC batch plant.*
- *Construction of the RCC buttress at the base of the emergency spillway will begin in October.*
- *Work at the emergency spillway site is not contingent on the public safety construction milestone and will continue past Nov. 1, 2018.*

Huntington Beach Desalination Project

Huntington Beach desalination project would help meet region's water needs

By Dr. Allan Bernstein

Sep 25, 2018 | 12:45 P

<http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/opinion/tn-dpt-me-commentary-water-20180925-story.html#>

Dr. Allan Bernstein is on the Environmental Quality Policy Committee for the California League of Cities and is the Chairman of the Orange County Water Independence, Sustainability and Efficiency (OC WISE) coalition. He is also a Tustin councilman and chairman of the Assn. of California Cities Water Committee.

As the price of imported water continues to rise, and technological advances for seawater desalination improve efficiencies, California's time to turn ocean water into drinking water has come. Orange County is poised to integrate purified ocean water into its drinking water portfolio, just as San Diego has successfully done by producing 35 billion gallons of drinking water from the Pacific Ocean in just three short years.

The ocean is the world's largest reservoir; it's always full and sits on our front doorstep. At the cost of a half-penny per gallon, seawater desalination is cost-competitive with the development of other new water supplies.

By producing 50 million gallons of drinking water per day, enough water for about 400,000 people, the proposed Huntington Beach seawater desalination project has the ability to meaningfully reduce Orange County's need to import water from Northern California or the Colorado River. Seawater desalination is drought-proof and impervious to climate and weather. It's Orange County's ticket to water independence.

The Huntington Beach Seawater Desalination Plant has secured numerous local, state and federal environmental permits. In fact, no regulatory agency has ever rejected the plant. Once built the facility will be the most technologically advanced, energy efficient and environmentally sound desalination plant in the Western Hemisphere. The project is approaching the regulatory finish line and local and statewide bipartisan support for the project is deep and wide.

Tennessee Valley Authority and China

‘Tennessee Valley Authority Imperialism’

Sept. 24 (EIRNS)—Seventy-five years ago Canadian economist Robert Bryce observed, of the Franklin Roosevelt Administration’s moves to create a new, post-war Bretton Woods monetary system and to develop the economies of nations such as China:

“This looks to be the opening for that New Imperialism which one hears about these days—a benevolent, liberal and far-sighted, if not actually socialist, imperialism—a TVA imperialism. The new imperialists would have as objectives, not a high return on capital, but rather a flourishing trade built up on the basis that would be created by the rising standard of living in the capital-importing country. More distant objectives would be the peace and strategic security for the lending country, achieved not so much through political influence, as through the political stability that a prosperous trade and progressive economic and social development would ensure in the borrowing country.”

Since today this rather precisely describes—not U.S. policy or British “public-private partnerships”—but rather, China’s new paradigm of the Belt and Road Initiative, all the attacks from American and European neo-cons and Keynesians claiming China is “imperialist,” practicing “debt-trap diplomacy,” and so on, should be dismissed for the garbage they are. These are fearful squawkings of those who, having done away with bank regulation, let the global crash of 2008 come on, and who are complicit in the greater crash coming on now.

If the globally admired model of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and its deliberate recreations in China’s Three Gorges Dam, its water-transfer projects and high-speed rails, its elimination of rural poverty—if those are imperialist, that is the imperialism we need, as it was in FDR’s Good Neighbor and anti-colonial economic policies.

The real question is whether the leaders of the United States, Russia, India, necessarily taking the point for other very qualified nations, will join with the President of China in launching a *new* Bretton Woods monetary system, for the purposes President Roosevelt saw in the original. The Belt and Road Initiative has already provided a launchpad for that policy—capital and credit flowing from “volcanoes” of economic and technological productivity, to developing nations, and flows of *speculative* capital being deliberately suppressed in the process.

The Schiller Institute’s international call for a New Bretton Woods, with 50 of the more prominent of its thousands of signers, is circulating today at the opening of the United Nations General Assembly; will circulate through the U.S. Congress this week, and is going out internationally. Helga Zepp-LaRouche stressed today that it is the only effective antidote to a European system marked by deeply unpopular and tottering governments, trying to issue orders to governments with broad popular support, the latter moving to work with China on the Belt and Road and with Russia.

This mobilization is led as well by the independent campaign of Kesha Rogers in Texas’s 9th CD, endorsed by LaRouchePAC—uniquely led, because Rogers has spelled out the program for a North American Belt and Road Initiative and North American Infrastructure Investment Bank; and because she can defeat Rep. Al Green, who leads the Democratic Congressional impeachment circus. All those who want to defend the Presidency should be supporting Rogers’ campaign against “Impeachment Al” in any way they can, and helping push President Trump into a New Bretton Woods and even “TVA imperialism.”